

**Amendments to the Abstract**

Please replace the Abstract with the following Abstract.

Sub  
C1

A valve assembly (9) comprising a reed (11), a port (13) which is opened and closed by the reed (11), and a damper [[means]] (15) for mechanically damping motion of the reed (11), the damper [[means]] (15) comprising a tube which is in communication with the port (13) on a side of the port (13) remote from the reed (11), and the tube being of such a size that, in use of the valve assembly (9), the tube contains a column of fluid which is sufficient [[fluid]] to provide substantial mechanical damping of the motion of [[for]] the reed (11).